Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LUSAKA 03282 081624Z
44
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 (ISO) W
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O 081422Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4594

S E C R E T LUSAKA 3282

NODIS/CHEROKEE

PLEASE PASS TO SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR US RH ZA
SUBJ: PRELIMINARY RESPONSE TO SECRETARY'S LETTER TO KAUNDA

REF: STATE 296386

1. AMBASSADOR PETER KASANDA, WHO IS ACTING FOR MARK CHONA WHILE THE LATTER IS IN GENEVA, ASKED ME TO COME TO STATE HOUSE THIS MORNING. HE TOLD ME THAT PRES KAUNDA WOULD LIKE TO SEE ME AT 9:30 PM THURSDAY EVENING (2:30 PM WASHINGTON TIME) TO GIVE ME A FULL REPLY TO THE SECRETARY'S LETTER. KASANDA SAID HE HAD NOT GIVEN THE PRESIDENT THE TEXT BUT HAD DISCUSSED THE CONTENTS OF THE LETTER IN GENERAL TERMS. THE PRESIDENT HAD SPECIFICALLY ASKED THAT I PASS ON HIS REQUEST THAT THE SECRETARY SEE MARK CHONA DURING HIS EUROPEAN TRIP. IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL TO HAVE A RESPONSE TO THIS REQUEST BEFORE I SEE THE PRESIDENT TOMORROW NIGHT. SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS COULD BE MADE THROUGH WISNER IN GENEVA.

2. KASANDA SAID HE HAD STUDIED THE SECRETARY'S LETTER CAREFULLY AND WAS FRANKLY VERY DISTURBED BY IT. HE WAS CERTAIN THAT THIS WOULD BE THE LAST SUCH LETTER BETWEEN THE TWO MEN. PRES KAUNDA WAS A VERY POLITE PERSON AND USUALLY UNDERSTATED HIS POINTS BUT HE HAS HAD STRONG LETTERS SENT TO HIM IN THE PAST AND CAN REPLY STRONGLY. IN KASANDA'S VIEW THE LANGUAGE OF THIS LETTER WAS SO BLUNT AS TO BORDER ON BEING OFFENSIVE. FURTHERMORE IT CONTAINED CONTENTIONS WHICH DID NOT CONFORM WITH HIS NOTES AND
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 LUSAKA 03282 081624Z

RECOLLECTIONS OF PAST DISCUSSIONS. THE MATTER OF A "TWO-TIER"

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

SYSTEM AS FAR AS HE WAS CONCERNED WAS NEVER STATED IN THESE TERMS. THE COUNCIL OF STATE AS A CONCEPT WAS ONLY BROUGHT UP BY THE SECRETARY IN LUSAKA ON HIS TRIP TO SOUTH AFRICA AND THE DETAILS OF IT ONLY ON HIS RETURN.

3. I SAID THAT I WAS NOT PRESENT AT ALL THE MEETINGS AND HAD NO RECORD OF THE DISCUSSIONS TO REFER TO BUT THAT I FELT TWO POINTS WERE IMPORTANT TO BE MADE. I HAVE PERSONALLY TRAVELED WITH THE SECRETARY AND SEEN MANY OF HIS LETTERS TO CHIEFS OF STATE AROUND THE WORLD. I COULD ASSURE KASANDA THAT THE FRANKNESS WITH WHICH HE ADDRESSED THE PRESIDENT WAS A MARK OF THE RESPECT WHICH THE SECRETARY HAD FOR HIS INTELLIGENCE AND THE CENTRAL ROLE WHICH HE WAS PLAYING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. IT WAS BECAUSE THE SECRETARY FELT THE ISSUE AT HAND WAS SO IMPORTANT THAT HE ADDRESSED THE PRESIDENT SO FRANKLY. THERE WERE FEW OTHER LEADERS AROUND THE WORLD WHOM HE RESPECTED AS HIGHLY AS PRES KAUNDA, AND I COULD ASSURE KASANDA, AFTER HAVING READ THE LETTER A NUMBER OF TIMES MYSELF, THAT THERE WAS NOT ONE WORD OF DISRESPECT INTENDED IN IT. SECONDLY, I SAID THAT I THOUGHT THE LETTER HAD TO BE UNDERSTOOD IN ITS ENTIRETY. THE THRUST OF THE SECRETARY'S LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT WAS THAT HE SHOULD USE HIS INFLUENCE WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO URGE IT TO ENTER INTO A GENUINE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATION. WHATEVER THE FINAL AGREEMENT REACHED AT THE CONFERENCE, TI WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE NATIONALISTS SHOW THEMSELVES WILLING TO CONSIDER AND DISCUSS THE MAIN POINTS AT ISSUE.

4. KASANDA ASKED WHETHER THE WILLINGNESS OF THE NATIONALISTS TO ACCEPT 4 AND HALF OF THE 5 POINTS COULD NOT BE SAID TO BE EFFECTIVELY ENTERING INTO NEGOTIATION. HE SAID THE PRESIDENT WONDERED WHY WE WANTED TO GIVE SMITH SO MUCH LEVERAGE BY INSISTING ON ALL THE POINTS WHEN THE US ITSELF HAD SAID THAT SMITH'S STATEMENT WENT BEYOND THE AGREEMENT. I SAID THAT IT WAS EXACTLY THIS POINT THAT WE WERE CONCERNED ABOUT, TO DENY SMITH THE LEVERAGE WHICH HE WOULD GET FROM A REFUSAL BY THE NATIONALISTS TO EVEN DISCUSS PARTS OF THE AGREEMENT. THIS ENABLED HIM TO CAST THE AFRICANS AS BEING UNREASONABLE TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND WORLD OPINION.

5. KASANDA TOOK SPECIFIC OBJECTION TO A NUMBER OF OTHER POINTS
SECRET

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IN THE LETTER. HE SAID THERE WAS NO QUESTION BUT THAT THE WHITES WOULD RETAIN SOME POWERS IN THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS AFTER MAJORITY RULE. IT WAS THE US WHICH INSISTED ON CASTING IIT IN RACIAL TERMS. HE ALSO CONTENDED THAT AT NO POINT HAD THE FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS SUGGESTED IMMEDIATE MAJORITY RULE. HE TOOK STRONG EXCEPTION TO THE IDEA THAT ANY GOVT IN ZIMBABWE RESPONSIBLE TO AFRICAN OPINION COULD POSE A THREAT TO ZAMBIA. MOZAMBIQUE DOES NOT AND NO OTHER AFRICAN GOVT WOULD.

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

KASANDA SAID THAT THE THREAT TO SUPPORT RHODESIAN WHITES IN THE EVENT OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION WAS DIRECTED TO THE WRONG PARTY. PRES KAUNDA WAS AS CONCERNED AS ANYONE ELSE ABOUT FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND HAD EXPRESSED THIS CONCERN ON MANY OCCASIONS. I SAID THAT NOTHING IN THE LETTER COULD OE READ AS A THREAT OR EVEN A STATEMENT OF US INTENTION TO ASSIST THE WHITE REGIME IN RHODESIA. THE FACT THAT WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO IGNORE FOREIGN INTERVENTION IMPLIES A WHOLE RANGE OF RESPONSES WHICH WOULD BE QUITE IMPOSSIBLE TO SET OUT AHEAD OF TIME BUT WHICH INVOLVED MANY POSSIBILITIES. IT IS CERTAINLY NOT INTENDED TO IMPLY MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE WHITES. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT WOULD BE IRRESPONSIBLE OF US NOT TO STATE CLEARLY AHEAD OF TIME THE IMPORTANCE WHICH WE WOULD ATTACH TO FOREIGN INVOLVE-MENT.

6. KASANDA REPEATED THE CONCERN HE FELT AT THE REACTION WHICH THE LETTER WOULD GENERATE FROM THE PRESIDENT WHEN HE READ IT. IN DESCRIBING HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH ME DURING RECENT MONTHS, KASANDA QUOTED ST. MARK'S ADMONITION THAT WE SPEAK IMPERFECTLY AND DO NOT EXPRESS OUR VIEWS WELL BUT WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER. I SAID I THOUGHT THIS TRULY REFLECTED OUR RELATIONSHIP.

7. REQUEST ANY COMMENTS OR ADDITIONAL ARGUMENTS WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE ME TO MAKE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE PRESIDENT. LOW

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Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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To: STATE SS SECRETARY
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